Summary

**WRIA 15 Watershed Restoration and Enhancement**

**Project Workgroup Meeting**

September 28, 2020 | 10am to 12 pm

## **Location**

Webex (see below)

**Committee Chair**

Stacy Vynne McKinstry

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**Handouts**

Agenda

Detailed Project Descriptions

Project Inventory

# Participants

* Stacy Vynne McKinstry, Ecology
* Paulina Levy, Ecology
* John Covert, Ecology
* Bob Montgomery, Anchor QEA
* Burt Clothier, PGG
* Alison O’Sullivan, Suquamish Tribe
* Dave Windom, Mason County
* Erik Steffens, GPC
* Greg Rabourn, King County
* Joel Massmann, Suquamish Tribe (consultant)
* Joel Purdy, KPUD
* Joy Garitone, Kitsap Conservation District
* John Turk, Skokomish Tribe (consultant)
* Paul Pickett, Squaxin Island Tribe
* Nam Siu, WDFW
* Sam Phillips, PGST

# Updates on Projects with Offset Benefit

* Stacy provided updates on water rights:
	+ General statement regarding support for water rights.
		- Stacy read the “Prospective Projects and Actions” portion of the plan for discussion
		- Members discussed if specifying the types of water rights was appropriate. It was suggested that the current language be replaced with “all valid water rights, including municipal water rights”.
		- Members would like the generic description to include projects where a partial water right is put into trust in exchange for investments in conservation infrastructure.
		- Stacy will share the revised draft for feedback prior to inclusion in the 2nd draft of the plan.
	+ Burt asked for feedback on water right descriptions.
		- Paul suggested adding the project sponsor in the project description/water right summaries (though this task requires Committee input; the consultants do not have capacity to identify the sponsor). Also, would like the County to be added to the project description.
		- Additionally, Paul suggested removing details and information if the water right holder had not been contacted.
		- Members agree that water rights where either there is no sponsor or if the water right holder has not been contacted, the water right acquisition opportunity will only be generally described and no offset quantity will be included.
		- Burt also is developing the language for the methodology used in identifying and selecting water rights for the plan.
	+ Vashon Maury general water right project description.
		- Greg supported the generic and grouped together project description for the whole island, as opposed to detailing each individual water right identified in this region. Project description forthcoming.
	+ Other water rights under consideration.
		- McCormick water right acquisition opportunity
			* Burt will refine the document (aerial photo). Burt also suggested looking into Joel’s question, about the water right holder and contact information; however PGG does not have capacity and also would not be able to build a long term relationship after any outreach.
			* Alison O'Sullivan shared on the chat: “This is typical process when selling off of forest lands. McCormick Land Co does still exist and Doug Skrobut would be the contact. Dave Ward probably has his contact info.”
			* Bob shared a resource on the chat: <http://archive.kitsapsun.com/news/local/mccormick-land-sold-to-new-developer-who-plans-to-start-building-2c620afd-6613-743a-e053-0100007f91f-370028031.html>
			* The group had a short discussion on the difference between the McCormick Land Company (forestry) and McCormick Woods (a land developer seeking a water right through the Foster Pilots in Port Orchard).
			* Stacy or Burt will reach out to Kitsap Co regarding a connection.
		- Bainbridge Island water rights:
			* Ecology will reach out to Christian and/or Mike for more information on opportunities.
		- McNeil water right:
			* Members are still interested in the opportunity there.
			* Nam will reach out to find more information from WDFW.
	+ Members are interest in conducting outreach to water right holders. Ecology will contact Washington Water Trust, or another well suited partner, and find someone with capacity to begin this outreach.
* Stacy provided updates on other projects with offset benefits:
	+ HDR is drafting project description for the Beall Creek (Vashon Maury) project
	+ HDR is drafting project description Kitsap Co-wide raingarden and LID installments.
	+ Additional considerations for the Mason County Rooftop Infiltration Offset Project:
		- Paul has technical questions and concerns .
		- Discussion on this project will continue, after members have reviewed the technical memo.
			* Stacy will send the link to the memo.
			* Paul will share his comments to the memo.
			* Paul suggested a deep-dive meeting for this purpose with Mason County, HDR, and Ecology.
			* Sam expressed that since this project is similar to the Kitsap project, a similar approach to both memos could be used.
	+ Stacy, Bob and Sam will connect to internally discuss the Seabeck Widening Project- Phase 2. Alison will also connect with Sam since she has a direct contact to the project sponsor.
* The group brought up gaps and additional projects to pursue:
	+ There may be project gaps in the South Sound and South Hood Canal subbasins, if the Mason County Rooftop Project is excluded.
	+ Paul expressed concerned about the Port Orchard Airport project; needs land owner outreach. Stacy or Bob will connect with Kitsap County to discuss a possible old gravel pit disposal location and initial outreach with the airport.
	+ Sam and Erik discussed forest/land rotation projects. These are small projects. But GPC brought up the Dewatto Headwaters Forest project, between Trust for Public Lands and Pope/Rainier. This is an enhancement of streamflow opportunity.
		- Bob shared a resource in the chat: <https://www.tpl.org/our-work/dewatto-headwaters-forest>
		- Stacy and Erik will work on next steps.
* The group discussed assigning Offset Benefits to projects:
	+ The Committee needs to determine the offset benefit assigned to each project.
		- Paul proposed having a range (by which we would only count the lower end as our offset benefit).
		- Joy mentioned that the current estimates are appropriate to some projects. However, there are projects that may best be suited with a range.
		- John Turk suggested that the range is a way to reflect the implementation certainty. The range could capture the assumptions and uncertainty that the project has.
		- The subgroup recommends looking at each project individually and assigning an offset benefit range or specific number depending on the justification.

# Habitat Benefit Projects

* The group discussed the approach for selecting additional projects to help achieve NEB:
	+ At the last meeting, the group discussed including projects if they have a potential offset value (even if qualitative).
	+ Stacy and Bob will conduct an initial look for projects that provide a habitat benefit, with streamflow benefits, based on categories provided by the group.
		- Potential categories include: Wetland Restoration, Riparian Restoration, Floodplain Restoration; PEW Removal; BDA/Beavers
	+ These projects would only be described qualitatively, without quantifying their offset value.

# Project Inventory Clean Up and Organization

* The group discussed any projects of concern or projects recommended for removal from project inventory:
	+ Several members support the removal of Culvert/Fish barrier projects.
	+ Alison has concerns about floodplain projects that are replacing spawning habitat.
	+ The group agreed to remove projects that are already on another plan or if they are already funded.
	+ Members should continue flagging projects that should be removed, but note that specific issues can also be addressed as project apply for funding or go to contract.
* There was a brief discussion on the types of projects that the Streamflow Restoration Grant Program will fund. It was noted that the Grant Program will not be able to fund all the projects included within the plan. Although the Grant Guidance is re-evaluated for each grant round, this year habitat projects were included and projects within a WRE plan were awarded points.
* The group begun a discussion on whether and how to prioritize, tier, sequence, or organize projects
	+ The group suggested separating projects into categories that will aid in determining the offset benefit and NEB:
		1. offset benefit is quantified, ready to implement;
		2. good projects, unquantified offset benefit;
		3. habitat projects;
		4. not currently legal, conceptual.
	+ Paul was interested in capturing the uncertainty of projects. For offset projects, that could be captured in the offset range. For the remaining projects, the uncertainty will be qualitatively described.

# Action Items and Next Steps

* Next Committee meeting- October 1st
* Various members will continue to pursue water offset projects
* The subgroup recommends looking at each project individually and assigning an offset benefit range.
* Stacy and Bob will conduct an initial look for habitat/NEB projects that provide both habitat benefit and streamflow benefits, based on categories provided by the group.